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THE SCHOOL REVIEW

A JOURNAL OF SECONDARY EDUCATION

VOLUME XV
NUMBER 8

OCTOBER, 1907

WHOLE
NUMBER 148

THE COURSE OF STUDY IN ENGLISH—THE CALL FOR IT, THE CHARACTER OF IT, AND THE CON- STRUCTION OF IT¹

Five years ago another committee of this association presented an exhaustive report upon courses of study.² Your present committee, with a view to ascertain the drift of change since that report, sent out a very humble and inoffensive questionnaire, as follows:

Has your course in English undergone revision in the past five years, or is any change now contemplated?

What is the motive and what the general scope of the change, (a) in elementary school? (b) in high school?

What has been omitted or reduced?

What has been added or emphasized?

What change has been made in the order in which subjects are taken up?

Is greater or less emphasis laid upon grammar? rhetoric? literature? written composition? oral expression? spelling?

The fact that opportunity was given to answer for the grades and the high school separately seems to have caused some perplexity, and to have prevented some from answering whose work was not precisely in either category. In general, however, the questions have been promptly and generously answered. No

¹ This report of the Standing Committee on Courses of Study (William D. Parkinson, superintendent of schools, Waltham, Mass.; Albert Perry Walker, Boston Normal School; Grace L. Deering, English High School, Cambridge, Mass.) was submitted at the annual meeting of the New England Association of Teachers of English, March 9, 1907.

² See *School Review*, Vol. XI (1903), pp. 746-56.

attempt has been made to tabulate the replies, nor would tabulation shed more light than can be focused in a brief statement. Indeed, the most striking features of the replies would not appear in a tabulation at all.

Briefly, the replies show not a drift, but an eddy. Change is in the air, but motive seems not to have risen to consciousness, and changes of emphasis or of order move blithely to the step of "All hands 'round." Grammar is pushed from grades to high school in one system, from high school to grades in another, confined to first year in some high schools, reviewed in fourth year in others. Preparatory work has been deferred to the last two years in one school, extended over the four years in another. Emphasis is more on grammar and composition and less on literature in one school, vice versa in another. Reading at home is omitted here, the number of books read outside of school is increased there; all for the betterment of the programme. If any general tendency appears, it is toward reduced stress upon formal rhetoric and increased stress upon everything else named in our list. This increased emphasis all along the line seems to be made possible in some high schools by increasing the number of periods per week assigned to English. It would be interesting to know whether other subjects were correspondingly curtailed in any.

The returns seem to disclose an utter dislocation of the present from the past in a large proportion of the schools. It is made evident that, with very few exceptions, the high schools are without any course of study or syllabus by means of which teachers may know what has been done by previous teachers in the same position, or by preceding teachers of the same pupils, or even what is being done by other teachers in the same school. The replies show that the individual teacher is a law unto himself, and that in many instances he has not been long in his present position. He does not know what change there has been because his predecessor is now married—and it is impossible to ascertain what she did; or his predecessor did not do much anyway, and he himself has not had time to undo it; or certain classes have been transferred to other hands, and he isn't sure

what their fate will be. As to what is being done in the grades, he refers you to the superintendent.

Incidentally it appears that, in the absence of any course of study, teachers usually elevate the college requirements into the vacant place—a place for which those requirements were never designed and never adapted. Here and there the avowed motive of a change is to secure freedom from the bondage of college requirements, but more often it is to reach a better adjustment to those requirements. Evidently, were it not for the influence, whether attractive or repulsive, of the college requirements, the high-school teacher of English would be generally without moorings. Most grammar schools have some sort of syllabus or outline; and if any have not, there is usually a considerable number of teachers in each grade who compare notes, and this mutual understanding constitutes a cohesive force which prevents extreme vagaries. The high-school teacher, however, has no blazed trail. He may have a so-called course which designates the number of recitation periods per week devoted to English, but he is left to plot the real course himself. Small wonder that the college examination becomes his one landmark, and that he circles about it like the wanderer who has lost all bearings. He needs a syllabus even more than the grammar teacher. In all but the very large cities he is isolated from other teachers doing parallel work, and from grades above and below.

Nor have the college-bred teachers undergone a training approximately synoptic, as have teachers normal-trained. Each teaches as he was taught, at least until experience and observation have taught him anew. However original and fertile he may be, he needs some kind of road-book to guard against omissions, wasteful repetitions, disproportionate emphasis, to insure continuity, co-operation, a common and definite aim, among all the many workers who first and last are intrusted with the fortunes of the same pupil. In the absence of one made for him, he must make one for himself, and he needs as much aid from the experience of others as can be placed at his disposal.

In speaking of the course of study, we sometimes have in mind the process through which the pupil is to go under the

guidance of the school, or the process through which, under conditions more ideal than the school affords, we would have him go. From the practical standpoint, however, we are concerned rather with the means by which the pupil's course is to be shaped than with the course itself.

1. Our present inquiry, therefore, has to do with that programme, outline, or code of instruction, which is placed in the teacher's hands as a navigator's chart to give him his bearings, and to both aid and induce him to take his students over a safe and direct course to a chosen destination.

The teacher, then, should regard the course, not as a boundary fence or a railway track, but rather as a series of way-marks indicating points of departure, points of destination, points of danger, set up, not to resist or obstruct individual initiative, but to direct it along right lines and to check centrifugal tendencies.

Such a chart the teacher should not only desire, but should demand. He should be familiar, not only with the portion that relates to his own sections of the roadway, but with what precedes and follows—with the whole from beginning to end. He should make it his business to understand its purport; and, if anything in it seems to him inconsistent or inexplicable, he should follow it to its source for explanation or amendment. He should obey the spirit of it, and knowledge of its spirit should free him from bondage to its letter. His attitude toward it should be, not that of a mere operative, working out a stereotyped pattern in exact and painstaking detail, but that of a professional worker who is to be familiar with his commission and in sympathy with its ideals, is to interpret it in the light of actual conditions, and to exercise discrimination and skill in suiting means to its ends.

2. The course in English, more than any other course, may and should be one, consecutive, coherent, consistent throughout the pupil's public-school career, keeping always in view the same ultimate aim.

This is common-sense. No thoughtful person would regard the curriculum as a series of canal locks in which activity is to

be confined to a certain annual opening of the sluices called promotion, and in which continuity exists at no other time. Yet we find it sometimes dealt with upon that plane.

If the course is to keep the distant aim in view at every stage, both elementary and secondary experience should enter into its making, and it should be made by an authority in which the teachers, both elementary and secondary, have confidence. Its promulgation by an individual or by a volunteer committee will not carry far. Certainly it is too large a task for any committee constituted as this one is, or to be effectively presented in a report of this kind. It seems necessary that it be prepared by a body large enough to include many schools, in order that it may be put in permanent form and be widely distributed; but its form should not be too permanent, since frequent revision will always be necessary. Boston is preparing a new syllabus of which the elementary portion is already in the printer's hands, and the secondary portion is in prospect.

In Connecticut the Council of Education has essayed the task and its syllabus is an important contribution to the cause. In New York the state department of education issues such a syllabus. The elementary portion of it bears marks of secondary-school authorship, but the secondary portion is comparatively simple and practical. If some dignified body in each of our New England states could be enlisted, their several independent studies would promise results. It is better for such a course of study to rest upon authority in the professional sense only, and not at all in the official sense. Even in New York, where this principle is not always observed, the syllabus is suggestive only, and is designed to be adapted and elaborated to suit the needs of such schools as may accept it.

3. What is the ultimate aim which such a course in English should hold before the teachers of every grade or year?

Simply stated, it is to teach the pupil to read and write. So naked a statement must, to be sure, be clothed with large meaning, but it is better to have a watchword whose meaning unfolds as we approach our destination, than one whose meaning must be defined anew at each turn of the way. The secondary course,

like the primary course, needs to state its aim simply. But it must still set its mark high. Interchange of thought and feeling, intercourse of mind with mind—what is there of human life that is not comprised in this? To read appreciatively, to write effectively, means no less. It may be said that to listen and to speak are of first importance; but the man who can read—can he fail of ability to listen? And the man who can write—can he not speak? The less are included in the greater. To listen and to speak are of time. Theirs is the fleeting moment. To read and to write are of the infinite. They put man into companionship with the immortals. They are capable of boundless development; and our business with the pupil is to start him on through lines. Perchance he shall write the thing which he hath seen, the things which are, and the things which shall be hereafter. And who is able to open the ultimate book and to loose the seals thereof?

Our aim must be simple enough for all to see; but the higher the meaning you may read into it, the larger the vision you may open to the student as he fares toward the goal, the better. Grammar as a science, composition as an art, rhetoric as an accomplishment, literature as a cult—these have no place in the common-school curriculum. Until our conception of what it is to read and write has risen far enough so that these studies fall into line as subordinates, as a means to our end, we might better exclude the terms from our pharmacopoeia. Whatever of their elements make for more effective writing, for more appreciative reading, we may avail ourselves of; but we should avoid the use of terms which suggest subjects imposing in themselves, and which are likely to present themselves to teachers as destinations instead of way-marks. Even the college requirements recognize this principle, and, throwing aside all ponderous phrases, declare that the essential thing is to write good English. To be sure, the examination questions leer at you from behind the curtain and tip a sardonic wink, but there are signs of amendment even here.

4. To read and write being the goal toward which the teacher is to usher the pupil, the teacher's chart of direction should prescribe certain essential lessons to be taught and certain

exercises to be given at particular stages. What is everybody's business is nobody's business. There are symbols whose proper use is absolutely essential to reading and writing; there are forms of expression which pass current everywhere. They must be learned and practiced. These are not few in the aggregate, but they should be few at any one stage. They cannot be learned all at once; some necessarily precede others; some are meaningless to young children, and others will never be learned if not learned early. But they are not so definitely marked as to sequence or adaptation that even the most thoughtful teachers can be sure in which particular year they belong, or can safely apportion each to himself his proper share of responsibility for them.

Nor, as intimated before, can these lessons be grouped under certain heads or classed together under subjects, and assigned—orthography, grammar, composition, rhetoric, literature—each to a certain grade. All these in their elements enter into every grade, but none of them belong as subjects in any. Thus, spelling must begin in first grade, syllabication comes later, prefixes and suffixes still later, and certain rules for the adjustment of terminal appendages will still sound like mystic incantations to students well on the way to college.

Here we pause to say that the committee is unanimous in approval of simplified spelling. We are not of those who were hypnotized by the President's order, but neither are we of those who were stampeded by act of Congress. The public printer seems to be the final arbiter of that Lilliputian battle, and we leave the issue to him. But common-sense and the typewriter are eliminating useless letters and we believe that schools should cease to insist upon spellings which are fast becoming obsolete in correspondence, and which will certainly be obsolete in good usage by the time our pupils reach mature years.

But to return from this digression: As is spelling, so is punctuation—not a bolus to be swallowed, but a regimen to be pursued. The period and question mark are met in first grade, the comma in address a little later, comma in series later; while the colon and semi-colon can hardly become implements for the

student's own use in writing much before second year in high school, although their significance must begin to be weighed much earlier, in his reading.

We speak of technical grammar as belonging to certain grades, and we dispute prodigiously as to what grades. Technical grammar belongs in all grades. It is only theoretical grammar that should be excluded from any grade, and all grades. One of the first difficulties of the little child in reading has to do with pronoun and antecedent. Those names he need not learn, but the teacher who does not see to it that the child recognizes what persons or things the pronouns stand for, is neglecting a principle of grammar which is technical in the sense of having direct application to the practice of interpretation upon which the child is engaged. On the other hand, the distinctions of mode and the sequence of tenses belong late in the high-school course; other grammatical principles lie along the way between, and still others should await the college and the university. The New York syllabus makes grammar-study conspicuous from the seventh to the twelfth year.

In the same way, rhetoric in its elements has a place at almost every stage. Practice in narration begins very early. Reasons pro and con interest boys and girls of twelve. Figures of speech ought to be made vivid long before they can be classified or named. How are we to avoid chance omissions and vain repetitions unless such lessons are specifically assigned and the assignment is made effective?

In addition to the class of lessons thus indicated, there are certain more general lessons which may well be assigned with equal definiteness. There is a time for story-telling, for drill-reading, for declamation, for letter-writing, for teaching to use the index and dictionary, for teaching to use the public library, for introduction to the theater. Into this category comes the college reading. Then, too, the pupil ought each year to make a friendly acquaintance with at least one or two authors, and it is well that some thought be given to the order in which they shall be approached. All these are proper lessons for special assignment.

Enough has been said to illustrate (but only to illustrate) the point that a degree of definite assignment is needed, and that it should be, not by high-sounding and widely inclusive title, but in simple terms indicating single steps. In the main, the lessons to be positively prescribed are points of beginning, and those to be designated in the suggestive way are such as keep alive and in effect that to which the student has already been initiated.

5. This supplementary designation should not go so far as to limit the teacher's freedom or to take away from him responsibility for the exercise of originality, inventiveness, initiative. The course of study should encourage this exercise, and for this purpose it should set before the teacher another and larger class of lessons collateral, supplementary, illustrative, suggestive—such a repertory as a good teacher of exceptionally systematic habits will himself accumulate as years go by, to be used as he would use his own and to serve as a nucleus around which to form his own, reminding him of interests which else had eluded him, beckoning him to heights which he might not have attempted.

6. The course of study may set before the teacher more or less definitely the standards by which the pupil's success is to be measured at the several stages of advancement. This does not mean that it shall lay down a marking system, a scale of percentages, or a table of pedagogical logarithms. But it may by precept and example enforce the principle that in the measurement of the pupil's writing the gauge is to be applied, not to his display English, but to the English he uses when attention is not primarily upon its form. It will help to set the right aim before the pupils, if merit is reckoned, not upon what they can tell about English in an examination, but at least in part upon how they apply it in their written work in other studies.

Since such a basis of measurement is severe, it will become necessary for the teacher to reduce the severity of his criticism more nearly to the standard to which he can hope to hold his pupils, and indeed to the standard to which he holds himself. For we are all aware that when teachers of English, interchange

memoranda or letters, but few of the papers passed would escape the blue pencil if presented by students. Students can be held more rigorously to reasonable standards than they can to drastic standards. One great trouble with the standards both in the schools and in the colleges is that they are set higher than they can be maintained, and so have to be lowered in practice; and standards once lowered no longer serve the purpose of standards.

The measurement of the pupil's success in reading is properly based in part upon his interpretation of what he has read, as shown both by the expressiveness of his oral reading and by his answers to questions upon his reading. It should be in part, too, upon the keenness with which he interprets the questions themselves. Even such questions as are used in the college examinations may be useful, if it be understood that success is not to be measured by the approach pupils make to the answer the examiner himself has in mind, or by the extent of his resources for answering, but by the aptness with which he employs his limited resources in meeting the unexpected situation.

The difficulty with setting standards is that the finer qualities of reading and writing—literary flavor, appreciativeness of sentiment and humor and fancy, “the daily theme eye,” as the contributors’ club puts it—these are too subtle to be measured and too rare to be set up as requirements. They can be apprehended only by a sympathy quick and generous, and to attempt to set up tests and standards, employing the terminology of the professional critic, is to pull up the plant to see if it is growing. But while literary taste is not to be acquired by analysis of literature, and may even be blighted by it, analysis is essential to literary power. To cultivate literary appreciation and neglect analysis is like neglecting technique in the study of music. The course of study must provide for analytical and exacting study of good models. It must provide for this purpose selections which are not included in the range of literature within which the pupil is expected to find friends and companions. Necessary as dissection is, we do not employ it upon the bodies of our friends. Standards of measurement and ideals are two different things.

The latter cannot be too high. The former easily may. This fact is sometimes lost sight of, and the two are confused.

7. The course of study must be to some degree suggestive of method. To go into the discussion of methods would encumber it and tend to prevent its becoming really familiar to the teacher. It should not formulate methods, but it ought by its own gradation to influence toward inductive methods, to exemplify certain fundamental principles of development, and to discriminate between those earlier activities by which impressions are derived and those later ones which involve reflection; between those earlier lessons which widen the pupil's command over vocabulary, idiom, phrase, or varied construction, as means of interpretation, and that later development by which those same instruments are subdued to his use in speaking and writing.

8. The course of study should point the teacher to available resources. Lists of reference books, of books for outside reading, of selections for memorizing, of selections to be read by pupils, of stories to be told, brief lists of words to be added to the vocabulary, lists of suggestive topics or devices for stimulating pupils to write—all these have a proper place in, or in immediate connection with, the course of study. If they are well made, they are not only convenient, but stimulating, and they set a standard of literary quality below which the teacher will not allow himself to fall. They may be arranged roughly by years, and, like suggestive and illustrative lessons, they are to be regarded as summoning the teacher to use them, unless he finds something better.

9. The allotment of time to English as compared with the whole time-schedule, and the apportionment of the English time to the several phases of English work, is another essential feature of the course of study. In general it may be said that the whole number of recitation periods assigned to each pupil in high schools is too large. The colleges discourage their own students from taking any such number of periods per week as their requirements force upon those in the last two years of high school. But it ought to be said that the schools themselves err in assuming that additional periods of recitation will strengthen the

work in any particular when the aggregate number is already large enough. One is reminded of the steam-boat with a whistle so large that the engine had to stop to get up steam enough to sound it. Beyond a certain ratio of recitation time to study time the recitation time is increased only at the sacrifice of study time. This, however, is aside from our present theme.

The proportionate share of time set apart for English indicates also its proportionate share of emphasis, although the fact that English enters in such varying degrees into other studies obscures the real ratio. In general it will be found that from one-third to one-fifth of the time of pupils is devoted to English throughout their school career, the ratio being the larger at the earlier end and diminishing later.

No time allotment should be upon hard and fast lines. The varying aptitudes of classes, and of teachers as well, forbid such rigidity. But this very variety of propensities and needs makes it exceedingly important that some normal be laid down to restrain too wide departures. Within the field of English itself, too, it is desirable that some guide be had as to the proportion of attention to be given to practice in reading, to practice in writing—both in their larger sense—and to instruction in the mechanism and means of expression; but that a wide margin be left for those lessons whose purpose is inspiration rather than instruction or practice, and which may transcend all classifications. So far as any division is indicated in the courses at hand, these three phases share about alike in both elementary and secondary school, except that in primary grades learning to read necessarily predominates. Whether in high school the prevalence of the three-period-per-week allotment to English has something to do with this equilateral triangular division, or whether it is the result of deliberate judgment, may be a subject of discussion.

In answer to our question as to what, in the process of recent change, has been omitted from his course of study, one teacher replies: "Talk about expression." This answer seems to imply restiveness under the yoke of fashion.

The question arises: Are we laying too much stress upon

expression at the expense of impression? The outlet should not be larger than the inlet, and if we expect any force at the outlet we must make the inlet the larger. We do well to recall that the writing and speaking vocabulary, and the whole speaking and writing currency, must be coined out of the bullion first mined, assayed, and refined in interpreting the expression of others. The attempt to force the process of expression up too near to the level at which impressions are received, or to force the speaking vocabulary and idiom too near to the listening vocabulary and idiom, may possibly limit the latter, and so limit both. To write even a business letter, one must reckon with what will be read between the lines. And one does not learn so to turn a phrase as to make it vibrant with meaning who has not first felt the vibration of many phrases and learned himself to hear the overtones that ring between the lines of what he reads. The one power must follow and be derived from the other, and must follow far in its wake.

One lesson a week devoted to the presentation of written work, conference and instruction upon it, and revision of it, should insure better results than are usually obtained in a four-year course. However many more periods per week are allowed for English, they may profitably be devoted primarily to the interpretive side, with such written and oral practice as are incident to it, which should be as free from the didactic element as may be.

Our returns show increased attention to oral expression. Here again caution is needed. The average English division in high schools is probably not less than twenty-five. In such a class oral training for one means aural training for twenty-four. To require twenty-four minutes of listening to one of oral expression, even assuming that the teacher keeps silence—which is not always a safe assumption—is certainly reversing the danger last alluded to. But the listening training one gets while another is practicing orally is not usually the best exercise of attention. Permit another brief calculation. The twenty-five pupils seldom average over one hundred and fifty minutes per week in class throughout the high-school course. Supposing

the teacher to maintain silence and all work to be devoted to oral expression, then each pupil will have six minutes a week for oral expression. Plainly, written expression and written testing of outside reading must largely predominate, if the school is to employ its time economically upon such a basis; and such oral training as can be given must be largely in the way of starting the pupil upon oral inquiries, conversational themes, oral readings, or declamatory practice or debate, which shall be conducted in large part outside of school.

All that can be done along these collateral lines is clear gain. And the oral reading of impressive passages, as an indispensable means of gaining insight into literature, must have a place in the time allowance. But the limitations of oral expression in class teaching must be recognized. Not only has written language the advantage in economy of time, but it affords opportunity for that close scrutiny by which one may learn to weigh the full significance of what one reads, and to revise and intensify the significance of what he writes.

10. The course of study must take account of the psychology of the teacher as well as that of the pupil. It is not the course as written in the syllabus, but the course as interpreted and administered by the teacher, that counts. It must be constructed with due allowance for shrinkage and some for breakage. There are certain prevalent tendencies among teachers to be indulged or to be restrained. It is not necessary in this presence to elaborate upon them. We recognize them in ourselves, and we may with complacency confine our mention of them to those of which the best teachers are themselves conscious.

There is the tendency to expect too much of the pupil, to overestimate his resources, to forget that he has not as a background that great complex of convention and experience which is second nature with us. It is this tendency that requires the course of study to distribute elementary lessons over a longer period than teachers themselves are tempted to do, and to follow each with a longer season of simple practice.

There is also the tendency to expect too little of the pupil, to underestimate his powers within the range of his resources, his

keen intuition, his depth of feeling, his personal poise. It is for this reason that the course of study needs to suggest literary models of a quality above what the pupil can be expected to analyze, and topics of a variety wide enough to tempt his response, whatever his interests.

There is a tendency to anticipate the work of a later stage. The teacher with his class on the double quick, having surmounted the breastworks, is fired with ardor to invade and conquer the whole realm. And, even if he is compelled to fall back within his own lines, he still feels that the momentary triumph was worth while; for the class has had a real taste of battle and will strike harder next time. This tendency would contain its own safety check if only the same teacher were to lead the class henceforward; for he would discover and weigh the effect upon future work. But in our wasteful bucket-brigade system of gradation, in which pupils change teachers annually or thereabouts, the course of study must hold the rein upon this tendency in so far as to keep one teacher from too far invading the province of the succeeding one. And it is extremely difficult to do this effectively without also dampening the very ardor which counts for so much in lending genuine impetus to pupils. On the other hand, the teacher of the grade above is in danger of attaching quite too much importance to having pupils at first hand in his subject. It might be convenient for the instructor if knowledge were parceled off in original packages to be transferred under seal to the cells of the brain, but the convenience of instructors seems not to have received first consideration in the original design. There are bound to be interlacings of subjects in every mind; and most minds must put forward a skirmish line, even if the new territory loses some of its freshness thereby before the main advance comes.

A more conspicuous tendency, and one which in a measure counteracts the last, is the tendency to be tyrannized over by the teacher of the grade above. It may seem odd to state this tendency in the passive voice, but it is in that voice that it must be predicated. There is little conscious tyranny, but there is a sensitiveness amounting almost to superstition among teachers

of all grades, which leads them to attach undue importance to what the teacher of the grade above may expect of the pupils, or may think, or worst of all may say. No little time is wasted in every school in preparing the pupils to answer questions which the next teacher may chance to ask. The tyranny of the college examination questions only illustrates this tendency. It is just as real in the grammar school and in the primary school, particularly, but by no means exclusively, where the grade above is in a separate building. Curiously, no teacher, however subject to it himself, ever seems able to understand why this feeling should exist in the grade below. This tendency is relieved to a degree when teachers are able to look to a course of study instead of to the next teacher; but in the main it is to be remedied by bringing the teachers together.

The last tendency to which reference will be made is the tendency to formalize; that is, to elevate a topic into a system, a branch into a department, an exercise into an art, each elaborated in detail, with complete classification and technical nomenclature. It is a tendency of the best minds to pursue a subject to its outer confines, and in the complexity of interests it is with difficulty that any of us limit ourselves to the simple and the elementary.

The textbook-makers skilfully foster this tendency. The enterprising youth who would learn to read and write must now carry in his satchel a grammar, a manual of composition, a rhetoric, a handbook of English literature, perhaps another of American literature, and a small library of annotated texts. Nor can he travel far from a dictionary. The volume of didactic print he must wade through forbids any extended reading of literature. Even the child who would write a letter must have it pigeonholed in his mind under the heads of business, polite, or friendly (and what a dire calamity if their ingredients should get mixed!) then thread the labyrinth of date and address and salutation and body and conclusion and subscription. It is because of this tendency that the course of study should steadily enforce simplicity, employ simple terms, point to simple lessons, and, if it must introduce the pupil to the dialect of pedantry, do it as the

Connecticut course does, presenting its technical terms, not as additional branches of study, but as accessions to the working vocabulary. The importance of simplicity cannot be overemphasized—simplicity of terms, simplicity of lessons, simplicity of processes, simplicity of instrumentalities.

The conclusion then is that a syllabus in English is needed; that it should be catholic enough to exercise a steadying and unifying influence over a wide area; that it should be made consecutive throughout the course, elementary and secondary; that it should lean always to the side of simplicity—simplicity of aim, of work, of treatment, of phraseology; and that this association should take steps toward its construction, not by a committee of its own body, but by some agency with resources for publication and circulation upon a large scale, sufficiently organized to carry on a thorough investigation, to discover and to command the co-operation of the best teachers of all grades, and while according due recognition to the views of all, to hold the scales between conflicting tendencies.